

REMARKS

Entry of the present Preliminary Amendment, in view of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

The present Preliminary Amendment amends the Abstract only to better conform to standard patent practice and not to recite reference numerals therein. It is believed no new matter is added by the amendments to the Abstract.

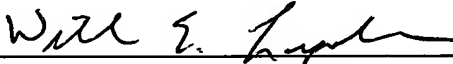
Applicant notes that an Office Action on the merits has not issued in the present application, and thus no fee is believed necessary to ensure entry and consideration of the submitted material.

Any amendments made in this Preliminary Amendment are not set forth in response to any substantive rejection of the present application in view of cited references, and therefore no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Consequently, this application is believed to be in improved form for examination, and an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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